

**EXETER-WEST GREENWICH
REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT**

January 05, 2010

SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES

The Exeter-West Greenwich Regional School District School Committee held a special meeting on this date at 6:00 p.m. in the Exeter-West Greenwich Jr. – Sr. High School Library. Members present were Susan DeSack, Chairperson; Valerie Zuercher; Mark Rafanelli, and Mary Walsh. Teri Cicero arrived at 6:25 p.m. Superintendent Thomas J. Geismar was present. Brian Butler, Principal and Mark Thompson, Principal were present.

Order – Chair DeSack called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m.

Consideration, Discussion, and Vote on Participation in “Race to the Top” – Superintendent Geismar addressed the committee with regard to EWG’s proposed application for the Race to the Top grant. Superintendent Geismar indicated that there would be no cost associated to the district in any way. If approved, the purpose of this grant will be to supplement the current curriculum, provide technical assistance, and allow collaborative curriculum insight with other districts. Superintendent Geismar indicated that EWG would not be in the P-1 group but would be considered for the P-2 group.

The purpose of EWG’s participation would be to increase its preparedness for the new Basic Education Program (BEP) and strategic plan. This grant would also afford EWG an opportunity to be part of the development of evaluative criteria for both teachers and

principals. Superintendent Geismar had met with district principals and NEARI representative John Leidecker with regard to the district's application. Mr. Leidecker indicated that NEARI is currently in discussions with RIDE and NEARI's participation was still uncertain. Superintendent Geismar informed the committee that paragraph ten of the application remains a concern to the teachers' association because it may run contrary to CBA's across the state.

Superintendent Geismar informed the committee that the district's application must be submitted by January 8 and if the committee changes its mind not to participate, the district must withdraw by January 13, 2010. The committee was also informed that if it decided not to participate it could become (involved). By doing so, the district would be eligible to apply for competitive grants such as the science technology, engineering, and math (S.T.E.M) grant. Superintendent Geismar indicated to the committee that Administration would be speaking to Science Department Chairperson Matt Savoie about developing a Bio Technology Program. The committee was told that the purpose of this grant was to develop assessments for students, collection of data from student achievement, and provide training for superintendent, principals, and teachers. Chair DeSack indicated that it would be good for the district to participate because it would allow EWG an opportunity to sit at the decision making table. Member Rafanelli voiced his support but had a concern as to where this initiative would lead. Chair DeSack used the analogy that businesses, although can work independently, can achieve great success when they work in concert with other businesses. Mark

Thompson indicated that the grant is a good way to improve the district's position with both the BEP requirements and the teacher standards requirement. Superintendent Geismar suggested that participation in such grants would increase the potential partnering with businesses and industry. Member Rafanelli wanted to know why the teacher association is reluctant to participate. Brian Butler indicated that there is a potentially that an evaluation component may emerge from the grant requirements. Mr. Butler also indicated teacher associations throughout the nation might be concerned about the possibility of inherent language differences between school committee and teacher association.

Chair DeSack asked for a motion to accept the [Race to the Top] application process. The motion to accept was made by Member Walsh and Vice Chair Cicero seconded the motion. The vote came in at 5 -0 in favor.

Adjournment - Member Zuercher moved to adjourn Member Walsh seconded the motion. Voted 5 – 0 in favor.

Brian Butler

Clerk